New tourism policy

†3085. SHRI JAI PARKASH AGGARWAL: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to take necessary steps for making a new Tourism Policy for proper presentation of Indian culture and heritage;

(b) if so, the details thereof as on date; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) to (c) The latest Tourism Policy of the Government was formulated in 2002 after detailed interactions with the industry associations, concerned Ministries & Departments of Central Government, State Governments and other stakeholders. The policy, *inter-alia*, aims to create and develop integrated tourism circuits based on India's unique civilization, heritage and culture in partnership with States, private sector and other agencies. At present, there is no proposal before the Government to bring out a new tourism policy.

Helicopter service between Madurai and Kodaikanal

3086. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to introduce helicopter service between Madurai and Kodaikanal to improve tourism;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Helicopter services are provided by Pawan Hans Helicopters Ltd. and other private companies on commercial basis depending on market demand for such services.

Tourism projects in the country

3087. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has recently reviewed the performance/progress of ongoing tourism projects in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof during the last three years in terms of physical and financial targets set and achieved, State-wise;

(c) the details of fresh proposals sent by State Governments;

(d) by when the proposals are likely to be given approval; and

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(e) the details of action plan formulated for promotion of tourism during the current year and next two years, highlighting the projects to be taken up?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (e) Tourism projects are sanctioned by the Ministry on the basis of project proposals received from the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations subject to availability of funds and inter-se priority under the following schemes:

1. Product/Infrastructure Development for Destinations and Circuits
2. Assistance for Large Revenue Generating Projects
3. Computerisation and Information Technology
4. Fairs, Festivals and Events.
5. Rural Tourism—Infrastructure and Capacity Building for Service Providers.

During the year 2007-08, financial assistance of Rs. 64513.23 lakh has been sanctioned for 277 projects for development and promotion of tourism in various States and Union Territories.

Implementation of projects is primarily the responsibility of State Governments/Union Territory Administrations. However, Ministry of Tourism also reviews the progress of projects with officials from State Governments/Union Territory Administrations at regular intervals.

Adverse effects on tourism due to Goa and Rajasthan incidents

†3088. SHRI MANOHAR JOSHI: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some of the incidents which have taken place in Goa and Rajasthan recently may have adverse effects on the tourism; and

(b) if so, the steps Government proposes to take to check such incidents?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) 'Public Orders' and 'Police' are State subjects as per the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India. As such, the prevention of crime, including crimes against tourists is the primary responsibility of State Governments/Union Territories. Following recent reports in the media regarding harassment and misbehaviour with tourists in India, the Ministry of Tourism discussed the issue of safety and security of tourists, amongst other issues, with Secretaries of Tourism of States/Union Territories, the Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Defence. It was emphasized that ensuring the safety and security of tourists is of paramount importance and State Governments/Union Territories must ensure the same. The foreign tourist arrival figure from January to March 2008 has shown an increase of 12.2% over the same period of 2007.

Budget Hotels

†3089. MS. SUSHILA TIRIYA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is going to make plan for budget hotels in view of increasing tourism in the country;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi